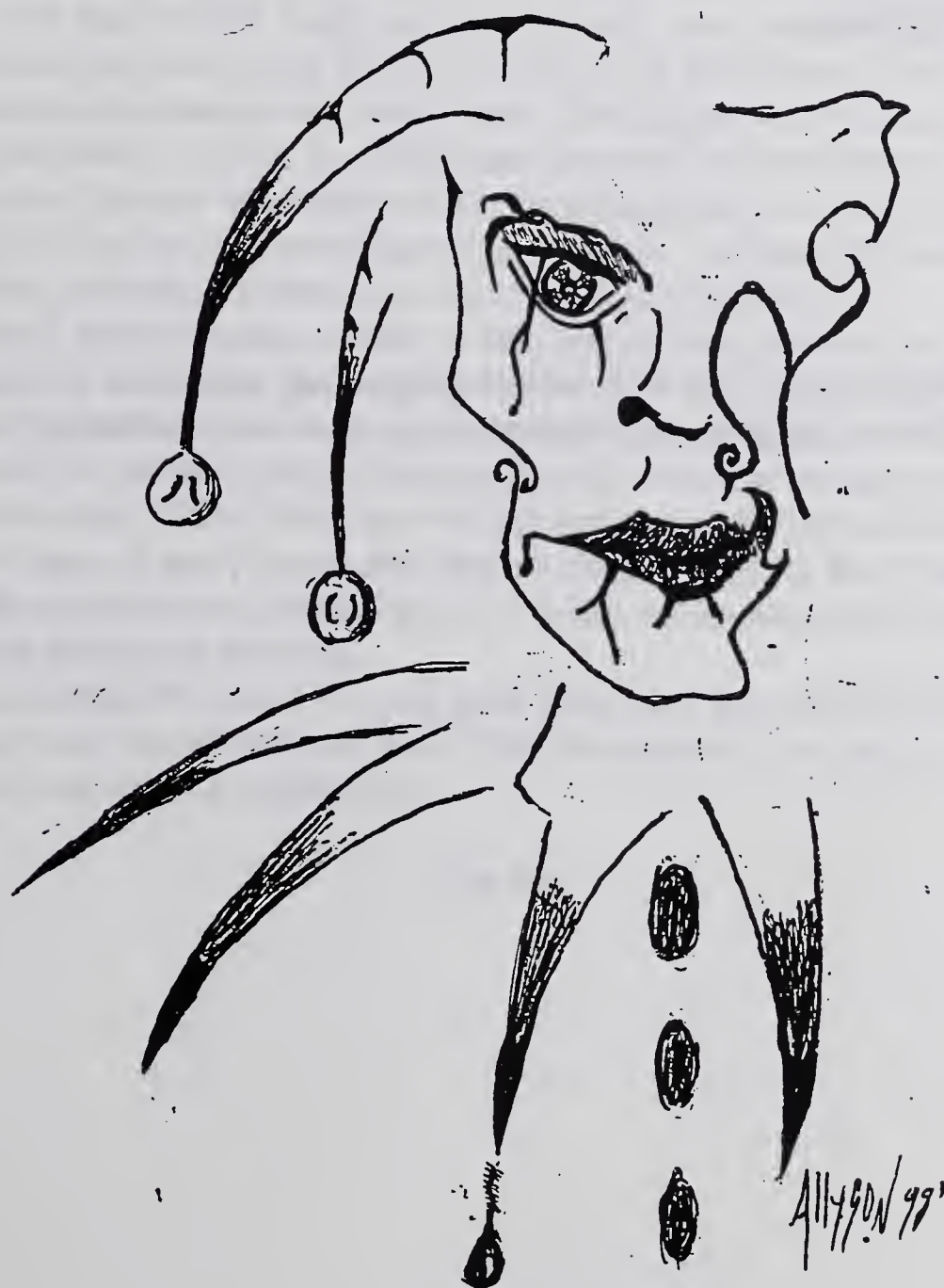


The Mole

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Mount Wachusett Community College

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All students are welcome to submit their original writings and artwork to be considered for publishing in The Mole or i magazine. Submissions may be given to any of the staff, or placed in their mailboxes.

I awoke in the middle of the night to a rather hard nudge in the ribs and a frantic whisper, "Faye, wake up, there's something scratching around outside our tent!" With my heart in my throat, I lay there quietly listening to discover whatever it was that my younger brothers and sisters were hearing.

Since I was all of thirteen years old and the oldest sibling in the tent that night, the expectation of bravery fell heavy on my shoulders, though I was just as frightened as they were of the thing that was out there in the dark. Sure enough, there was the sound, a definite and determined scratch, scratch, scratch near the outside corner of the tent. Cautiously, I rose to my hands and knees and slowly unzipped the window flap a few inches so I could see what dangerous wild-animal dared to threaten my brothers, sisters and me. As I peered through the screen I could hardly believe my eyes--just outside our tent was a skunk, and (in my fear) that beast appeared to be as big as a dog and very dangerous.

I knew it was time to think quick and come up with some sort of plan to save our lives. Unfortunately, the only idea I could think of was for one of us to "make a run for it" to the cabin where my parents were sleeping and enlist the aid of the biggest hero of all--our Dad. As I shared my plan with the others I could tell from their lack of response that there were no volunteers for this mission. It seemed that they would rather hide in the tent together than venture out into the dark--in fact, I really liked their idea a lot better than mine, but when I suggested that we all stay and try to go back to sleep they countered with a vote of 4 to 1 in favor of my first plan.

With the skunk scratching away outside the tent, and my heart pounding hard within my chest, I slowly unzipped the door. Then, gathering up my courage, I took a deep breath and ran as fast as I could across the six foot expanse of sand between our tent and their cabin. The commotion I made in my panic to get inside before the skunk jumped on me was enough to wake my parents. I stuttered out our story. Within a short time my Dad had cleared the yard of one mean skunk, and before long we were all safely tucked back into our sleeping bags for the remainder of the night. We were a little apprehensive at still being out in the tent, but we were confident that our Dad had gotten rid of that skunk once and for all..

You know, a thought has occurred to me while sitting here remembering the terror that we felt that night--there was the unmistakable odor of the skunk outside, but, really, it was no stronger than the smell of our own fear inside that tent.

Faye Arey

DREAMING to REALITY

I can remember the last time I was in heaven.

About three months ago when he asked me for a ride home. When he got out I touched the seat and I could actually feel his heat. Like I was feeling him. The way his voice was trapped in my car days after he got out. You know--I'd actually turn and speak to the empty seat...thinking he was there listening to me ramble on about nothing. I'd actually touch the place where his leg would be--had he still been there. I'd sit in my room and pretend to talk to him, asking him questions where I knew I could make up the answers. Then I'd bring him home. I'd actually get into my car, and get so into it, like he was really there, and I'd drive to his house to bring him home. Well, I'd get there, I'd stop in front of his house and turn to my right to say good-bye. This is when I noticed only an empty seat. He was already home. Reality had set in. I'd glance over at his house, hoping he didn't see me. Embarrassed by my own actions I'd speed off, fighting back my tears. I'd finally get to the safe point, the bridge, and I'd let the tears pour out. Talking to myself, finally realizing it's just myself, I mumble, why can't I have that? Why can't drop him off for real? Then suddenly, I looked over at the empty seat again. I realized that I can have that...

every time I close my eyes...

by Jessica Baker

ONE RIVER

Again, I find myself at another fork in the river.
Like the last one, I found myself unable to choose.
Knowing one could become rougher than
the other, I chose neither. They both looked so
promising, so clear, as if they needed me. Floating
along the edge of both, I waited for nature to take
its course. To make my choice. One sucked me in,
and the journey began. Is this the way? I don't know,
but the end shall tell. Maybe its competition would have
had more to offer, but was too shy and weak to pull me in.
Halfway down seems too late to turn back; the current too
strong, and at the mercy of God, I pray--floating away. Just
staying afloat becomes an endless battle, but the end is near,
and finally I'm there, finding myself in a sea of fear. I looked
back through soaked eyes, looking back to see the other. Too
far, too late--she's gone.

Jeremy Whalen

EMOTIONS

I looked around, and I saw--
The terrible injustices men inflict upon each other;
The people living in squalor, with no hand held out
To pull them from their despair,
And the exchange of hateful words and hurtful blows,
And tortures too horrible to contemplate
Between brothers under the skin--
And I wept.

I looked around, and I saw--
Acre upon acre of quilted outpourings of emotion,
And rubble-dusted, tear-streaked faces of anguished helpers
Whose fingers scrabble through the ruins.
A small grinning face, the giving of a blossom,
The looks of compassion and understanding passed
Between brothers under the skin---
And I hoped.

I looked around, and I saw--
Two long-time enemies shaking hands in a rose garden,
And people donating time and skills to provide a habitat
For one less blessed than they.
The flickering of vigil candles and clasping of hands,
And the collecting of provisions to share
Between brothers under the sin--
And I smiled.

I looked around, and I saw--
A gathering of voices lifted together in joyous harmony,
A church supper, where all shared the dishes prepared
By young and old, dark and light,
The mixing and mingling of thoughts and ideas
And vast experiences passed on and on
Between brothers under the skin--
And I laughed.

Jeanne Hue

The Mind's Eye

The exact date is of little importance to any one but me. Suffice it to say that I have dreaded the arrival of this day for many years--exactly how many, I'm not sure--but many. Surprisingly, the day starts like every other day with my looking forward to what the day will bring. But this day isn't like any other--it's my birthday--my 60th birthday. I'm not prepared for it and I don't even like the sound of it. Sixty--it has a hard sound, not soft like 30, 40, or even 50. Strangely enough, I didn't feel 60, but then again, I didn't know what 60 was supposed to feel like. Perhaps my parents played a practical joke on me when the year of my birth was recorded and they had planned to tell me about it later in life so that we could all enjoy a good laugh. If that's what they did, they forgot to tell me about it before they went to meet their maker.

So here I am officially called a Senior Citizen as impossible as it seems, at least to me. There are perks that go along with this 60 thing...wisdom (if I knew then what I know now), retirement, discounts, and most of all freedom. I like that last thing--freedom--sort of the same feeling I had when I was a teenager when I got my driver's license. But still--60--sounds old, doesn't it? I can't change the numbers and I had to accept the fact that the years are moving forward, and so the celebration of my second 30th birthday went very well.

When the day ended I was pleasantly surprised to discover that I didn't feel any differently than I had felt the previous day. As a matter of fact, catching a glimpse of my image in the mirror, I was relieved to see that the same me was still there. Sure thing, it was the same me that had been looking back at me all these years. That teenager with the brand new license.

Val Schedin

As the rain fell one January night
Soft fingers with wet palms caressed me.
She came to me
Her soul painted on mine with one quick slice of a scalpel
Blood dripping
Her cries echoing
And my wretched scream...

Jennifer Shattuck

Day Dreams

What becomes of us who dream,
Greatness I am told.
But I've yet to find
my soul's salvation.
Smiling face,
broken inside.
I stare blankly out the window
at the sky,
wishing the day away.
My cold green eyes
are growing weary
alone in a dark room
as the day ends.
Lying,
but refusing to sleep.
Drifting, but finally delivered
to the stillness,
It's all I wanted.

Anonymous

Chaos

I live in a world without limits. Nothing to control the mind. Thoughts go uncensored. My feelings run free.

The chaotic rage of emotions clouds my vision. I cannot see. The endless struggle with the subconscious leaves me apathetic. I feel no emotion. My disillusioned perception leaves me swirling, dizzy. I cannot stand. Insanity creeps into my mind, infesting my thoughts. All knowledge is forgotten. I discover with a child's wonder. All innocence is lost. I am defiled.

Freedom is such a closed mind. No other thoughts but someone else's. Freedom to think what they want me to. Self confidence in them. Knowing what I want...or at least that's what they tell me I want. The freedom to do things the way they tell me to. I am free within the walls they erect. I refuse to let them run my life, thus I live as they want me to.

No control over destiny. No control over fate. No control over...

CHAOS.

jmc

Cynthia Charm

Cynthia Charm
was a real nice girl.
She never did no one any harm.
She had a silver sparkling baton she used to twirl.
Her and Chuck were homecoming queen and king.
The blue birds used to sing.

But now a haggard and beaten middle-aged wife
she stares into the deep black abyss of her coffee cup.
In the prime of life
yet feeling all used up.
She has everything a girl could ask for
but nothing more.

Dark secrets
behind drawn window shades.

She's got money,
solid and liquid assets.
She's got a Sony
with a library of video cassettes.
A microwave oven
and her husband's brutal loving.
She's got a washing machine,
and in the dusty attic
an old cardboard box full of broken dreams.

When it fell apart,
when he broke her heart...

When the mortgage fell thru,
when she found him in the arms of another
when the dollars dwindled to a few...
The walls of her suburban castle crumpled
as her drunken cheating prince stumbled
into the darkened room.

She cried
for something that a long time ago
had died.

Curled up in the corner
fiery tears streak down her sweet
painted face,

as his hard rock fists come down
pound! pound! pound!
on her silky soft wrinkled flesh.

The anchor man in the big screen T.V.
reads of political polls, creating an illusion
of rationality.
In the darkness of night
after the violent storm,
feeling all used up
she stares into the black abyss of her coffee cup.
In the prime of life
the battered wife
methodically gulps down twenty mystic pills
and the roaring drills
inside her head cease.

Slowly the glassy kitchen haze
grows thicker.
The warning lights flicker.
Soft glowing darkness greets her.

One thirty-five a.m.--the ambulance
arrives,
a little too late
--just on time.

Cynthia Charm
was a real nice girl.
She never did no one any harm.
She had a silver sparkling baton she used to twirl.
Her and Chuck were homecoming queen and king.
Once again the blue birds sing.

ESP

PLASTIC MAN

Binary code bit pounding
asphalt valleys and concrete mountain top scenery
compact digitized laser beam harmony
pre-packaged processed cheese food sustenance
hi-fi Technicolor peace
gluttony perpetuated paper illusion contestation
standardized glossy pin up love
pre-fab ab-fab fruitless utilitarian education.
diagnostic statistical science of frustration
machine manufactured plastic dreams
and hi-performance chrome plated custom made man.

by ESP

QUESTIONS

Did I hear you speak,
or was it just the wind?
Did I see you glance my way,
or was it merely a tilt of your head?
Do you even really know I'm here?
Can you see my longing?
Do you care?
I don't know how to handle this;
it's been too long since I've felt
such wonder and fear...
and hunger, like a pang in the pit
of my stomach.

I wait for a sign,
for a look, or a touch,
that will leave its mark upon my skin
A searing glow
seen, not be others,
but only in my heart's eye.
Can you not tell me
what it is that you feel?
Do I really want to know?
Could I live with the knowing
if it's not what I wish?
I must.

by Jeanne Hue

It's so easy with Edmund. I know what I want from him. He gives me all of the pleasures that only a man whom I do not love can give me. I know that he will always be ready for me. Waiting for the time when I will come for him. We both know that intoxication erases commitment. And with him, that's all right. I must admit that a part of me wants to go back into the room where he lays half conscious on the floor. But I can't.

You see, there is this man in front of me, with big hands and dirty boots, towering above. It's been so long since I stood in the shadow of such a human being. And yet, here he is, his stare heating my body, and his words convincing me more and more each moment that I want to go home with him. Everything seems different. Body chemistry has changed. And now, as I look at him, I realize I could never convince myself of all the lies that kept me safe before. It has been a long time since I looked at a man and thought of him as more than just someone to kiss after I achieved my ultimate pleasure.

I walk into the other room, hoping he will follow. He does. I want him. And I know that he definitely wants me. But for what? I couldn't stand it if he only wanted to feel me beside him for just one night. What if he thinks of me as I have thought of every other guy I'd ever took to bed, and then left soundly sleeping as I slipped out into another day?

His friends walk out into the cold and call to him. He must be leaving. I pray that he comes over to me and says something. Anything. And he does. He wants me to go home with him. And I agree.

Eventually, I end up folded into the crumpled blankets on his bed. From the moment I met him I just wanted to be naked in those big hands and see his dirty boots lying next to his bed on the floor. But he kisses me with a deepness I can't understand. I'm afraid that it is deception I taste in my mouth. And that the only truth of this night, is that what is happening between us has nothing to do with truth.

I have known him for exactly four hours. And if it had been any other man, I would have already given myself to him and fallen asleep. But I couldn't do it. In this short amount of time I had already given him feelings inside of me I convinced my self I would never feel again. So I couldn't give him the only thing I had left...me.

And that was all right with him. And that made me think that I was more than just a new body, a new mouth, and a new face for him to explore. So he kissed me goodnight. And I closed my eyes. And I pretended to go to sleep.

Morning came, and I left. With only a short note to confirm my existence. I took one of his jackets. But I don't know if it was really because it was cold outside or because I wanted to have reassurance that we would see each other again. There isn't anything out there that could give you the same peace inside than that of a night next to a good man. So I left with my satisfaction tucked away in the torn picket of his coat.

It's been almost a week since that night. And his jacket is still hanging over my chair in the kitchen.

Maybe I'll call Edmund.

by jennifer shattuck

My wings are captured in a web.
Like a butterfly caught in a spider's
trap
Watching for you through the mass of humans.
You weren't there. Eyes--
searching, searching, searching. Lost.
Can't find you.
It's silly--you know.
I think the hair on your arm was touching my arm once--
I almost felt like a part of you.
You didn't even realize it.
And--when you talk--huh...
I inhale extra long just so I can breathe in your words--
and the air you let out.
Sounds insane I know--
it's my last resort...my only chance...
Call it obsession.
Call it what you want.
I call it 'fantasy'...
It's like--you may not be "there"--
but every time I close my eyes you are.
In my dreams.
I'm afraid to wake up...

by Jessica Baker

The curve of the lens changes with time.
But, of course, I say, "No, not mine."
And the tush needs a push and the breasts aren't the best,
But, of course, I say, "No, not mine."
So, I put on my bifocals, nice try,
And tighten my tush, wear cups that push,
But, of course, I say, "No, not mine."

by Judith A. Durkee

I'LL STAND BY ME

If the world falls down around me,
In my spot I shall remain and persevere.
As but one force may crush me,
The massive hand of fear.
As my doubters turn against me,
I'll stand by me and fight.
While from this war I'll not want to flee,
I accept that I may lose if they are right.
When the forces of a narrow mind attack,
I'll stick to my guns.
Even if their wielding cannons,
Compared to the pistols that I pack.
And though you may come to doubt me,
Continued will I thrive.
So long as I stand by me,
"I" shall always remain alive.

by Chris Banahan

CHANGE

Two years time,
that's all it's been.
One tenth of my life.
It seems like a lot,
but it's been fast,
faster than I could have ever imagined.

All the trips,
here, there
nowhere special.
All the nights.
They never amounted to much.

Once, I believed in hope,
but I cannot anymore.
Like the cycles of the moon,
I can only count on change.

Have you changed?

I'm where you left me.
It's been cold ever since.

by Paul Aho

The pompous blabbering through endless phone lines.

It is when we are together and nude.
Black skins, like crows, like demons
in velvet shoes, dressed to the teeth
with the sweet actions of Our father, the gay Satan.

Sub conscience nudity is Jesus disguised
like an anvil, it is the age of discovery,
the age of fame, the age of gay friends that fall
in love with their best mates,(who turn out to
be female.)

Hello? God? Are you there?

We're all God on the inside.
Even in fits of suicide we are God,
or at least we possess him in our soul.
Ironic, isn't it?

The angel:
"What's ironic?"

The demon:
"The fact that God wears a disguise."

The angel:
"What do you mean disguise?"

The demon:
"God hides itself behind evil."

The angel:
"If you could convince me of that I would call *that* ironic.!"

(a short pause)

The angel:
"Are you going to try?"

The demon:
"No. The fact that you must indulge in the soul of yourself before God will prove itself to you. After
all, evil is easier to complete, and that takes no true self examining."

The angel:

"The more I know you, the more I think you as blind lunatic making an attempt to claim the words of your inner voice as rational...But the more honest I become with myself, the more I realize that you and I are insane just the same."

The demon:

"I do not waver the term 'Angel,' and the hearts of my brothers be not looked upon as, as gentle as the white clothed, halo, dress of your mates. But this I tell you out of fear and out of protection of your own soul; do not think that my way is the most lustrous, for the men in my mind are not kind Be the angel."

The angel:

"It is you whom I am in love with."

The demon:

"Don't get involved with me."

The angel:

"You wouldn't tell me that if you didn't feel for me....""

The demon:

"True...I must be the only demon with a conscience
by Ryan Regan

T.V.'s Child

He is a lonely boy, around
so much love, I see he is
lonely; at the age of three
constantly watching T.V. to
meet my needs. T.V. in the
Siting Room, T.V. in the bedrooms.
Rugrats, Power Rangers, Doug...
Wonder how he knows them word
for word. Hey Arnold! Scooby Doo
What have I done, it's time to
change the channel, time for
intermission. I don't want you
to be mesmerized from the
addicting drug...Television. It's
time to tune out, tha-that-tha-
that's all Folks...

DJ

Stadium

so many chairs straight in a row
sitting there not knowing
what to do.
many of them empty,
but some of them full.
nameless beings of this world
you find yourself that way
through this world
wandering around the cities
looking for a place to sit.
by Cora Cleveland

So you want to play hard ball? I can't, not the way you grownups do. I'm little, can't you see? Look at my flowered dress and chunky fingers. Look at the shadows beneath my eyes. That's from never getting enough. But it is not sleep. It is not food. At least not table food. There's a hole in my heart. Pierced by the withholding of nurturing. I huddle alone. Fueled by anger, frustration; starved by unintentional negligence. I carry them around like a forty pound sack, welting my neck. It burns my flesh and strangles my insides.

I carve my name on the weathered barn; near the bottom where rhubarb returns each year without prompting. Lizzie. I live. No one will stomp out my arrival. I play ball. Underneath the barn there is a life of its own. Gathering up my game I return to my victims. WHACK, WHACK, WHACK; forty times on the chopping block! I axe my mother. Then I raise my clenched fist and chop away my father, my brothers, and my sister with a good promise of more. I take a whack at society. Snuffing out ole Olga, was next. She is the most tormenting first grade teacher a student could fathom.

Trembling, I go to the cellar window, webbed and stained with yesterdays. As I wipe a spot to peek out a reflection of a very vulnerable small child, chilled at the thought of her deeds, stares back at me. I had chipped away at my spirit till the soul was as black as the coal bin that stood next me. I had killed off the love of parents, sister, and brothers. Hatred had hardened my heart in the first grade of school. Society rules were tough but I had learned how to play hard ball. I went out from the musty cellar and turned my face up towards the sun. I looked all around. My heart was pulsing with life! But, it was for the sun, the moon, the stars and the long grass that brushed against me. Glancing up again I see the name Lizzie, permanently carved, I live.

Lizzie

by Judith A. Durkee

Crystals

I hung them in the window
to catch the morning light.
Their multi-facet surfaces
are such a lovely sight.
The sunbeams in the morning
bounce off their polished face,
reflecting on the pearly wall
like multi-colored lace.
But when the lamp-light's glowing
and night presses 'gainst the pane,
my pendants gleam with icy fire
--they've come alive again!

Oh, wild haired man
Why do I seek your wisdom?
Show me the way to your truth
And I will follow

Though my feet
may be too small for your footsteps
And the light that shines down
onto your soul
will not light my way
I will still be
close behind
in the sweat of your shadow

Oh, wild haired man
Where is this place
that your soul resides?
Who is the savior that lifted you
out of the night?
Will you show him to me
and let me breathe the air
that he exhales from his lungs?

Oh, wild haired man
I must cleanse myself
of all ulterior intentions
Don't just show me the way
to the truth of my being
But take me there
with my face buried in your warmth
and my nakedness
bared to your soul
For it is not just
your wisdom I seek
it is your pain
your essence
your fire

Oh, wild haired man
it is you...

jennifer shattuck

FREE BIRD

I could hear the shouts from the other rooms. Sound travels quickly and clearly over the partitions of this shop. I stood there, eyes fixed upon the door, waiting for someone or something to appear. As the seconds passed, I was thinking I would join in whatever was going on. Just then,, I could see what had produced the chaos. A bird had flown in through the loading bay doors and was caught inside the building. The bird was flying around in circles, confused and frightened by the bright sodium lamps, ceiling fans and the objects that were being thrown aloft by shop employees. Growing tired, the bird circled and circled erratically until it slammed into a window in front of me, dropping lifeless to the floor. I thought the bird was dead. I walked around the benches and tables, and saw that the bird had somehow survived. A few people were shouting "Ha, step on it!" as I bent down to inspect this unfortunate traveler, I could see the bird's black eyes accepting the consequences of falling into human hands. Then, taking a rag from my back pocket, I covered the bird. Wrapping my hands around its body, I lifted the bird from the floor with enough pressure to suppress any struggle, yet gentle enough to instill a feeling of safety. I walked down the hall holding the bird and opened the outside door with my back. It was a beautiful Autumn day. I cupped the bird in one hand, and pulled away the shroud, looking closely at nature's instrument. I was in awe of its design, and the fact that I was holding such a wild and free creature. A few seconds passed and, without warning, the bird flew away. I watched it and wondered where it was going and hoped it wasn't too far behind.

by Jim Tedesco

Widow's Litany

Don't grieve alone;
Because nobody else will.
Cry all you can, get out the pain;
Because nobody else will.
Accept your loss yourself;
Because nobody else will.
Take care of yourself;
Because nobody else will.
Watch your finances;
Because nobody else will.
Take charge of your life;
Because nobody else will.
Love and care for your children;
Because nobody else will.
Learn new things for yourself;
Because nobody else will.
Have confidence in yourself;
Because nobody else will.
Don't be lonely;
Because nobody else will.
Live your life all your life;
Because nobody else will.

by Dorothy Scarbrough

We are numb inside our cocoons of flesh and bone,
Out for ourselves,
Someone tell me when the mainstaple of life changed,
Water to money,

Where is the base of our problem?
Hidden deep below the Vatican
Maybe the Pentagon is just empty inside five walls,
Maybe my spint is being drained inside the vastness
of the earth,

Moon and stars, bees and trees
earth and air,
An intricate system in continuous development and evolution,
each and every element in love
each dependent on infinite reason;
Dependent without panic or greed.

Man to man we are out for self-preservation,
Is it our dog eat dog world that makes us so hard,
Darwin knew that we all evolved,
Christ knew that we were all so ignorant that he spoke
in parables; only the pure could understand truly.
Even Dalmer knew that we don't understand what this is all
about, each postulating hypothesis, each out in search.
Maybe for success, money, acceptance, independence,
safety, god, enlightenment, ancient knowledge...

Will we always kiss and rebuke what we don't understand?
Another divine revelation covered up and forgotten,
Another enlightened soul murdered for not conforming,
Or just a simple child overlooked and neglected;
holding the key to this whole puzzle,
unraveling the bonds of mankind's true purpose and destiny.

Have we forgotten the purpose of the mundane existence
in the passive and the aggressive; an answer,
Lost somewhere in the past
And still uncovered in present dogma.

by Shawn Bernard

Dedicated to our Teacher, Colleague, and Friend,

Robert Gilman

Who knew...

That the touch of his apple cheek flushed color into our own. That a sweet hello was a last goodbye.

Who knew...

That his contagious smile would be perennially affixed in our minds. Or his surrendering eyes would now meet with a new found province.

Or that his gifted acceptance for who we are became his glory in a friend and a humanitarian.

Who knew...

As he dispersed his rewards—gleaning his fields with the wide eyes of a child—he'd open so many doors.

A brief worldly interlude

sealed in an envelope of mystery shadowing my bereaved heart shadowing yours,

Who knew.

by Judith Durkee